

Urban District Council of  
Sowerby.

ANNUAL

# REPORTS

— OF —

Medical Officer of Health

— AND —

Inspector of Nuisances

FOR

**1925.**

SOWERBY BRIDGE:

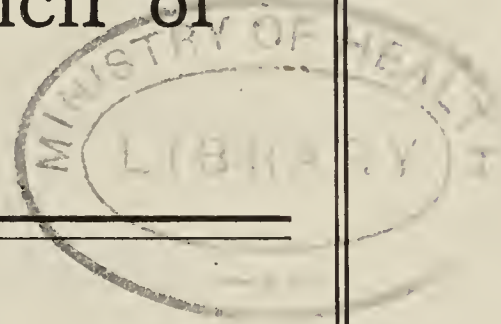
J. W. EDWARDS, PRINTER, &C., TOWN HALL STREET.

1926.



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# Urban District Council

— OF —

## SOWERBY.

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### PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE.

December 31st, 1925.

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Councillor E. MEADOWCROFT, J.P. (Chairman).

„ A. MEADOWCROFT.

„ S. HANSON.

„ F. GREENWOOD.

„ E. BROADBENT.

„ H. E. HOLROYD.

„ N. HANSON.

„ G. H. HOYLE.

„ T. DEWHIRST.

„ R. H. HOLLAND.

„ J. MITCHELL.

„ F. BROOMFIELD.

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### PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT.

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Medical Officer of Health :

JOHN A. ADAMS, B.A., M.B., B.Ch.

Sanitary Inspector :

T. A. NOBLE, A.R.San.I.

## URBAN DISTRICT OF SOWERBY, 1925.

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### STATISTICAL SUMMARY.

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Area of District in acres (exclusive of water)	...	2462
Rateable Value	... ..	£10,247.
Altitude, varies from 270ft. to 1250ft. above sea level.		
Latitude, 53 deg. 42 N.	Longitude, 1 deg. 56 W.	
Population (Census of 1921)	... ..	3180
Birth Rate (1924)	... ..	18.6
„ (1925)	... ..	14.3
Death Rate (1924)	... ..	16.2
„ (1925)	... ..	15.9
Death of Infants under 1 year of age (1924)	...	4
„ „ „ (1925)	...	4



## SOWERBY URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

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### Report of the Medical Officer of Health,

For the Year ending December, 1925.

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*To the Chairman and Members of the Council :*

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to submit for your consideration my Report for the year 1925.

**Geological Formation.**—The District is situate on the dip-slope of a mill-stone grit formation, the rocks consisting of alternating beds of sandstones and shales, which dip, roughly, from N.W. to S.E. The lie of the strata is of great importance as regards contamination of wells from impurities higher up. The contour of the District is mountainous, and the surface, with the exception of some little agriculture, done chiefly for the purpose of improving the sward, is laid out in grass.

A considerable quantity of milk is produced, which is principally sold as new milk, the surplus being made into butter.

During the War some cereal crops, principally oats, have been grown with not very satisfactory results, as the altitude of the land and the absence of clear sunlight, owing to the smoky atmosphere prevented ripening of the grain.

**Occupation.**—The inhabitants are chiefly employed in the foundries and factories in the valleys, many of them combining factory work with agricultural pursuits. As a result, the physique of the people will compare most favourably with that of the town dwellers in neighbouring districts.

In past times there has been a considerable amount of consanguineous marriage, which has not exerted a beneficial influence.

The population during the year under review is taken at 3210.

The District is gradually becoming peopled by comparatively aged folks, which will help to explain the generally low birth rate and the advanced age of a large proportion of the deaths.

**Births.**—Males 24, females 22 ; total 46. Birth rate 14.3 per thousand against 18.6 in 1924. Birth Rate for England and Wales during 1925 was 18.3.

No illegitimate birth registered in 1925, one in 1924.

**Infantile Mortality.**—Four deaths occurred during the year in children under one year, giving a mortality 66 per thousand births.

Two of these deaths were due to congenital conditions.

The Infantile Mortality for England and Wales during 1925 was 75.

**Deaths.**—Males 19, females 25 ; total 44. Death Rate 15.9 per thousand against 16.2 in 1924. Death Rate for England and Wales during 1925 was 12.2.

#### Ages at Death.

4 deaths occurred under 1 year.

1	„	„	between 1 and 5 years.
Nil	„	„	5 „ 15 „
1	„	„	15 „ 25 „
16	„	„	25 „ 65 „
9	„	„	65 „ 75 „
13	„	„	75 „ 90 „

One Inquest was held during the year.

Not certified—One.

Violence—Nil.

Suicide—Nil.

Sixteen deaths occurred outside District.

**Zymotic Disease.**—During 1925 fourteen cases have been reported as against two cases in 1924.

No death from this cause.

**Diphtheria.**—Two cases, one removed to Hospital.

**Scarlatina.**—Eleven cases during the year, seven removed to Hospital.

**Erysipelas.**—One.

**Epidemic Diarrhoea.**—A few cases of ordinary type were present during the late summer.

**Tuberculosis.**—Two deaths occurred during the year and two cases notified.

Cases of Tuberculosis attend the Tuberculosis Dispensary in Sowerby Bridge.

### **Respiratory Diseases.**

Eight deaths occurred from Bronchitis and Pneumonia.

Five deaths from Cancer occurred during 1925.

**Hospital Accommodation.**—No Isolation Hospital in the District, but arrangements have been made with the Halifax Corporation for the reception of cases in the Halifax Borough Isolation Hospital.

**Venereal Diseases.**—The District is served by the Venereal Clinic at the Royal Halifax Infirmary, where cases receive attention free of charge.

**Schools.**—Three Schools in the District. During last year water closets have been installed in the Boys' Department at St. Peter's School, bringing the sanitary accommodation up-to-date.

**Housing.**—900 houses exist in the District, of which number 800 are of the working-class type.

In the census of 1911 there were 125 uninhabited houses in the District, now there are practically no uninhabited houses.

Dwellings are built of stone and are, as a rule, scrupulously clean, but many of them do not come up to the standard of requirements under the Housing Scheme of the Ministry of Health. Owing to a general scarcity of houses these cannot be condemned as unfit.



There are several examples of over-crowding, even though the average occupancy is only 3.5 persons per house.

There is an estimated need of 60 houses.

In the course of the year five houses were constructed out of old buildings.

**Water Supply.**—Triangle area has a supply of water by a main from the Soyland reservoir. The houses at Providence Place, and those on the main road near Sowerby Bridge are supplied with Halifax Water from Sowerby Bridge. Sowerby Town is supplied from a reservoir at Sowerby Green, and the outlying parts are dependent on springs, which are numerous and yield well.

## **GENERAL REPORT.**

**Sewage.**—Conveyed by a sewage system to disposal works at Sowerby Bridge and Luddenden Foot where it is dealt with.

**Cowsheds.**—Conditions, fairly good. The cowsheds are generally kept clean and well lime-washed, but in some cases more attention will have to be paid to the general ventilation and lighting.

Milk is of good quality and is mostly sold outside the District.

No complaint has been made from any District in which the Milk is sold.

In view of recent legislation on milk supplies, I feel there is a difficult time ahead of the milk producers in this area. To bring the milk up to the high standard aimed at by the Order more up-to-date methods of handling the milk will have to be adopted and, in many cases, reconstruction of dairies and cowsheds at, perhaps, a prohibitive cost will be necessary.

The addition of a small wooden hut for handling the milk where it is not possible to adapt the present buildings for this purpose, may meet the requirements in some cases.

The consumer must be prepared to pay the enhanced cost of standard milk. Another problem still remains: I refer to the present uneconomical method of delivering milk to the customer. The question of co-operation amongst the farmers for the collection and delivery of milk is worth consideration.

Instead of each farmer delivering his own milk from door to door, is it not possible to have a system of collection in bulk from the farms with distribution from a central dairy in, say, Sowerby Bridge?

The district might be mapped out in areas and, instead of four or five milk carts with as many farmers competing in a street, one cart with the necessary attendants would supply a good sized area.

The saving of time and horseflesh would give a good financial return.

**Factories.**—Three factories and one dyehouse, giving employment in the area.

**Bakehouses.**—Five, clean and well lighted. No underground bakeries.

**Conclusion.**—There has been no special incidence of disease, and, as was to be expected, the deaths were chiefly of people of advanced years.

Like most other similar Districts in manufacturing areas, we feel the need for more housing accommodation and, in view of this, the question of an ample supply of water for domestic purposes had become acute.

A public supply of water has been laid on from a neighbouring area, Soyland, to the Triangle area, and connections have been made with many of the houses.

This ought to give an impetus to the building of the varied class of dwellings for which your District is so eminently adapted. It will also bring into action your sewage system which, so far, has only been utilized to a small fraction of its capacity.

The amalgamation with the more populous District of Sowerby Bridge, now assured, will supply many of the pressing

needs of this area—Isolation Hospital accommodation, mortuary, ambulance and a good sanitary outfit, amongst others.

It will also give room for the expansion of Sowerby Bridge up the Ryburn Valley, a valley that will soon become a residential area for a large industrial community including, perhaps, Halifax.

I am, Gentlemen,

Yours obediently,

JOHN A. ADAMS, *M.O.H.*

For detailed statement of work carried out by Sanitary Department see Sanitary Inspector's Report.

## **Sanitary Inspector's Report for 1925.**

TOWN HOUSE,  
SOWERBY.

*To the Chairman and Members of the Sanitary Committee.*

GENTLEMEN,

I have pleasure in submitting to you my second annual report of the District for your consideration.

**Nuisances.**—I have made many inspections in the District for the detection of Nuisances, a number was found, mostly minor Nuisances of which 17 were abated without having to serve notices. Nuisances reported to me, 23 ; abated without serving notice, 17.

**Scavenging.**—The Scavenging of the District is done by the Council by direct labour. One Horse, Man, and Cart being employed, along with a Scavenger, or Thrower out, and the work takes up about five-sixths of their total time.

**Tips.**—Two Tips are mostly in use, namely, Daisy Lea, and Mill Bank, the property of Mrs. Hadwen, for which we pay an annual rental of £7 10s., Daisy Lea tip being the Council's. Only two complaints have been received regarding these Tips, and of only minor importance, five-sixths of the refuse going to these



Tips and one-sixth to other Tips. Frequent inspections have been made to the Tips to avoid any damage by Fire, &c. During the year 1087 loads have been collected at a total cost of £317. Loads average, 90 per month. Cost per load, 5/10.

**System in Use.**—Privy Middens, Dry Ashpits, Tubs, Bins, and W.C.

Privy with Midden type	...	116
Dry Ashpits	... ..	41
Privies, cleaned by occupiers		74
Tub Closets	... ..	114
W.C.	... ..	179

Commenting on the system of Water Carriage, what a contrast to the other methods, Clean, Expedious, No Smell, No Nuisance.

**Sewers and Drains.**—A New Sewer has been laid to White Windows Cottages, 6 inches in diameter, a length of 267 yards with 3 manholes. I feel sure this will be a good investment of the Council in time to come. The Boys' side at St. Peter's School has also been laid and is working satisfactorily, would that we could say the same of the other Schools in the District. I have inspected 18 drain connections, all new drains.

**Housing.**—There has been no Housing Inspections this year.

As Housing is a costly business I dare not suggest a remedy as no big company would come into our District to open out, and should that ever happen it will mean private ownership and no help to the working classes. One building has been converted into 4 dwellings at White Windows. Here again, outsiders will be the tenants. There are a few cases of Over-Crowding.

**General.**—I have stoved and disinfected seven houses for Infectious Disease, and one School. I am pleased there are no



Offensive Trades in the District, though Fried Fish Shops may be termed as such, and have inspected them periodically, and found them clean and tidy.

**Slaughter Houses.**—Only one in use in the district at present, have paid numerous visits and found it clean and well kept. There are five salesmen for meat, mostly using the Sowerby Bridge Abitor, and one or two who are not shop keepers.

**Water Supply.**—We have only water supplies in some parts of our district—Triangle, Sowerby New Road, and Main Road. Additions have been made at Providence where a good supply was needed, what a boon is a good water supply to good sanitation, and a few more have taken our water at Triangle, another 200 users being required before we can make the undertaking pay its way.

**Bakehouses.**—There are five Bakeries in the district, none are underground, and comply with the regulations as to cleanliness, &c. Have paid visits to them and am gratified to see them in such good condition. There is some improvement in one who has frequently met with disapproval.

**Cowsheds.**—There are 90 Cowsheds in use, 82 Cow-keeps, and 24 Retailers in your district. The number of Cows is about 550. A very large percentage of the farms are really small holdings with accommodation for 5 to 8 cattle. I have paid visits to 46 farms during my time here, and find that there are some really good farmers, who are desirous of doing the best they can in the matter of cleanliness. Others are not so good, and I am afraid there will have to be a better standard kept in this respect.

**Smoke Abatement.**—Have taken observations of smoke from 3 factory chimneys, and as the cry is for pure air, smoke abatement is a problem that is being tackled all over the country.

**Petroleum Acts.**—There are two licensed Petrol Stores in the district, both are underground tanks, ventilated, and are in accordance with the Acts.

The District is a large one, and to be thorough in the work would take a considerable part of an Officer's time.

In conclusion, I desire to thank the Chairman and Members of the Sanitary Committee for their help, and further the M.O.H., whom I shall always be pleased to work with.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

T. A. NOBLE, *Sanitary Inspector.*

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